Stanford University

Department of Communication

Communication 112
Writing for Film
Fall 1980
M-W 2:15 - 4:05
4 units

Irv Drasnin,
Consulting Professor
Redwood Hall G-10
Office Hours: W 10-12,
after class, or by
appointment.

Course Description

This course will concentrate on the research, conceptualization, structure and writing of the non-fiction (news documentary) film. Emphasis will be placed on the translation of ideas, issues and events into film form and content. Assignments will include the preparation of a documentary film proposal; preproduction planning for a film to be made in Communication 113 (for which 112 is a prerequisite); and exercises in writing for broadcast and film. Selected documentary films will be screened and discussed.

Required Bibliography

Todd, Alden: Finding Facts Fast 2nd edition (Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California).

Clark, Kenneth: Civilisation (Harper & Row, New York, 1969). Foreword.

Rilla, Wolf: The Writer and The Screen: On Writing for Film and Television (Wm Morrow & Co., New York, 1974). Part Three, Chapter 1 (Documentary: P. 115-132).

Television and radio newscasts (local and national).

Selected documentary films.

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Suggested Reference Books

Bliss-Patterson: Writing for Broadcast.

Wimer-Brix: Workbook for Radio and TV News Editing and Writing.

Course Requirements

1. A detailed proposal for a one-hour documentary film, 5-10 pages in length. This will be the equivalent of a term paper. An outline and oral progress report will be expected before completion. The proposal should include subject areas to be covered; possible film locations; interviews to be conducted; sources and other relevant bibliography. The proposal should also include the intellectual basis -- your reasoning and supporting arguments -- for what would be covered in the film.

2. A minimum of two short proposals, with outlines, for a 2-4 minute film to be made in Communication 113 (winter quarter).

3. Writing assignments for broadcast and film.

4. All assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced. No late papers will be accepted.

Deadlines

October 13: Three proposed topics for a one-hour documentary film.

November 3: Progress report and discussion of documentary research and outline.

December 3: Completed one-hour documentary proposal.

December 8: Proposals, with outlines, for short film to be made in Communication 113.

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Suggested Topics for Documentary Film Proposals

1. The Draft
2. The Microchip Revolution
3. The Jock -- or Student Athlete
4. The Olympic Movement
5. Fraternity
6. Students: The Next Generation
7. The Old Firehouse
8. Christianity on Campus
9. The Stanford Daily and The First Amendment
10. What's Going On At The Lab?
11. MBA -- The New Golden Rule
12. Is There A Job Out There?
13. Housing: Crisis of The Middle Class
14. How Are They Doing Down on the Farm?
15. Women: Executive Suite -- or Bitter?
16. Chinatown
17. The Chinese Student Abroad
18. Zimbabwe -- The Newest Nation
19. East European Communism - 25 Years Later
20. The Caribbean: Conflict, Confusion and Communism

This list is intended to offer possibilities and to stimulate other ideas. It is not all-inclusive. Other subjects may be proposed.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION - SPRING QUARTER 1981-1982 - FACULTY SCHEDULE

Instructor	Class Schedule	Office Hours
Abel, Elie	Comm. 177A Editorial Writing MW 11-12 G-17	M 10-11 am T 10-12 am W 10-11 am, 2-4 pm
Alexander, Ron	Comm. 113 Vis & Aural Comm TTh 10-12 F-13 Comm. 224C Film Prod III MW 10-12 F-13	By Appointment 497-0706
Blaustein, Julian	Comm. 211C Screenwriting III MW 2:15-4:05 G-16 Comm. 212C Script Analysis III TTh 2:15-4:05 G-16 Comm. 215C Ed. Film & TV Sem T 7 pm G-19	By Appointment 497-4904
Breitrose, Henry	Comm. 180/280 Film Criticism MWF 11-12 G19	By Appointment 497-4621
Chaffee, Steve	Comm. 319 Doc Resear Meth MW 3:15-5:05 G-17 Comm. 372 Adv Comm Th & Meth TTh 3:15-5:05 G-17	By Appointment 497-4611
Drasnin, Irv	Comm. 223C Writ for Film III TTh 10-12 G-16 Comm. 242C Broadcast News TTh 1:15-3:05 G-17, G-15 or Pine Hall	T 3:30-5:00 pm and by appointment
Foote, Dennis	Comm. 253 Eval Resear Meth TTh 10-12 G-17	MWF 3-5 and by appointment
Franco, Jean	Comm. 145/245 Lat Amer Film TTh 1:15 240-241L M 7 pm 030 (History)	T 2:30-5:00
Isaacs, Norman	Comm. 178/278 Media Mang Sem Th 3:15-5:10 G-19	T 8:30-4:00 G-21 W 8:30-4:00 Th 8:30-3:15
McIntyre, Bryce	Comm. 100 Editorial Tech I MW 9-10 G-19 Comm. 102 Edit Tech Lab F 8-10 G-15	MT 2-3 and by appointment
Medsger, Betty	Comm. 140/240 Hist of Am Jour TTh 1:00-2:45 G-19 Comm. 174/274 In-Depth Report TTh 10-11 F-12 (Spruce)	TTh 9-10 G-1 TTh 3-5 and by appointment

SIX PHASES OF A PROJECT

1. ENTHUSIASM

2. DISILLUSIONMENT

3. PANIC

4. SEARCH FOR THE GUILTY

5. PUNISHMENT OF THE INNOCENT

6. PRAISE & HONORS FOR THE NON-PARTICIPANTS

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